

# Huge employee cuts at city hall – not quite

With election season over, our focus must continue to be on job creation, internal reorganization making government more transparent. In the coming weeks and months, I will be exposing actions taken by your city that I believe are not in the best interest of you, your family and a better functioning government. Phoenix is heading in the same direction that as other stodgy bureaucracies whose major goal was to protect the status quo, such as California, General Motors, Detroit and Greece. I will be offering what I think are better alternatives to that path. The point of this message is to give you the real facts behind some recent pronouncements by from city management. I am sure you have heard that the city has eliminated anywhere from 1,500 – 2,000 “actual people,” a statement that is misleading at best. The real number of people who have been let go during this last round of budget cuts is 15 not 1,500-2,000 “actual” people. Below is the city-produced transcript from our City Council meeting this summer that confirms that number. Additionally, according to city staff, about 52 people were let go in the prior budget year, 12 of them permanent employees and 40 temporary. Over a two year period the grand total of individuals let go is around 67. Unfortunately, you were given the impression that Phoenix made substantial cuts to personnel and that “tough” sacrifices were made. In fact, as with any large organization of 15,000-plus people, you have normal attrition and resignations that affect your employee total. Attrition, resignation and cutting vacant slots does lower body count, but it doesn’t come under the heading of making tough sacrifices or eliminating positions, as it has been portrayed. I will be sending you future messages covering topics such as the true cost of pensions and its impact on the taxes you pay, policies passed by the city that will have a negative impact on your property tax, a new policy granting large bonuses to employees, a new process that will ensure future fee increases and much more. As always, I encourage you to pass this along to everyone you know who cares about the direction of Phoenix. You have my commitment that I will continue to expose these decisions that will harm you and the city. As always, feel free to contact me or my office at [council.district.6@phoenix.gov](mailto:council.district.6@phoenix.gov) or 602-262-7491. I also encourage you to visit my web site, [www.changeaz.com](http://www.changeaz.com), which details other areas that your government has raised your taxes for the purpose of protecting themselves.

*Below is the transcript from a City Council formal meeting on July 7, 2010 that shows the actual number of employees who were let go, PDF at: [http://phoenix.gov/webcms/groups/internet/@inter/@pcc/@dist6/documents/web\\_content/051712.pdf](http://phoenix.gov/webcms/groups/internet/@inter/@pcc/@dist6/documents/web_content/051712.pdf)*

**DICICCIO:** Okay, well, I’m just making a point, Mayor. But the other is, I’d like to make a comment as well to the employees that are here. All of us, including myself, and I know there’s some controversy around that, but we all know you do a good job. We all know you do a fantastic job. We all do know that you represent the City of Phoenix, and we respect that. But, I’ve got to tell you, from my perspective, this, this is the first of many tough decisions that are going to be made at the City here. We are having a hard time in our economy. We’re having a difficult time. We’ve got people losing their homes, people losing their businesses, people boarding up their businesses, people barely making it day-to-day. We’ve got individuals that are making \$8, \$9 an hour, and they can barely make their payments. And we are constantly putting pressure on them as a City, by raising fees and taxes on them. And I want to submit, I want to talk to Mr. Schmidt (indecipherable) because he made some comments. As a matter of fact, Mr. Ramirez stated, and the woman from District 5, I can’t remember her name. But, there’s a feeling that the City hasn’t done enough to try to help you and help protect you. And I want to just walk through a couple of things. So, I may ask Ms. Gleason this question. **In last year’s budget, the \$270 millions that were caught, how many actual employees were let go?**

**GLEASON:** Councilman, I’d have to defer to Janet Smith, the HR Director.

**DICICCIO:** Janet. I saw her over there.

**SMITH:** **In the last Citywide reduction in force, we laid off 15 full-time employees.**

**DICICCIO:** **And how many of those 15 were permanent or part-time employees? Do you remember that?**

**SMITH:** **They were all full-time employees.**

**DICICCIO:** All full-time. Okay, and that, that, that’s the extent of the question. Thank you. What I want to submit, and I just want to give you some facts and figures that are from another perspective as well. I mean, and this just basically shows you what the public is being asked to do. And I’ve got to tell you, I do appreciate the fact that for the first time ever, City employees have, you know, actually taken a cut. Well, the public has as well. Of, you know, the City has done a good job of trying to protect your jobs, and here is what they have done. If you look at the \$270 million in cuts, 15 people were actually let go. Fifteen. In other organizations in the private sector, you are talking in the hundreds that would be, probably 5, 600, maybe 700 individuals, because that would represent about \$70 million dollars worth.

*(re-typed from PAGE 19-20 of the July 7 Formal Meeting’s verbatim as transcribed by the City Clerk’s Office)*

Respectfully,

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